

THE MILITARY

KATHY E. FERGUSON AND PHYLLIS TURNBULL

The U.S. military is the second biggest industry in Hawai‘i. While the military has a lengthy history here, its growing presence over the last half century is due primarily to the enormous political influence of Senator Daniel Inouye. Born in 1924, and elected to the Senate in 1963, the man known simply as “The Senator” has been the primary promoter of all things military. Given his long incumbency, remarkable political skills, and iconic status as a war hero, it is highly unlikely that any other representative will be able to maintain a similar supply of federal resources to our state. As chair of the powerful Senate Appropriations Committee, Senator Inouye is able to bring home remarkable levels of federal funding: according to the Department of Business, Economic Development and Tourism (DBEDT), federal investment in Hawai‘i in 2007 was over \$14 billion. As Native Hawaiian and Wai‘anae Harbor Master William Aila has remarked, “We have an artificial economy” because of the military’s presence, and we can expect about a 30 percent decline in federal funding when Inouye’s career ends.

The military’s investments here will soon become tenuous, because the training of troops can be done more economically elsewhere. For many decades, criticism of the military in Hawai‘i has been the province of a small, hardy band of peace activists, environmentalists, and Native Hawaiians, whose critiques are often met with skepticism and patriotic outrage. The predictable decline of military holdings in a post-Inouye era will require a different approach. The ongoing environmental, ethical, and cultural controversies surrounding the military are therefore intensified by a looming practical consideration: since our second biggest industry is very likely to shrivel in the near future, what are we going to do?

HISTORY

The military came here in stages, starting with the arrival of the first U.S. warship in 1814, and the permanent rotation of warships in 1867. In the nineteenth century and for the first half of the twentieth, oceangoing ships were

the only viable form of global transportation. During that time Hawai'i was an important coaling station for ships, as well as a handy launching point for other colonial endeavors in the Pacific. Pearl Harbor's deep-water port and repair facilities, as well as Schofield Barracks' extensive training and housing facilities, were consistent with this imperial strategy. But times have changed. Massive air freighters can move military technology and personnel rapidly around the world, lessening the strategic significance of fixed bases. Similarly, sophisticated virtual training methods do not require any particular geographical location.

The long history of military expansion in Hawai'i reflects the changing needs of military personnel and war-making technologies. The first permanent U.S. military garrison arrived in 1898, close on the heels of the overthrow of Queen Lili'uokalani in 1893 and the annexation of Hawai'i by the U.S. in 1898. Since that time, local authorities have worked closely with military leaders, making Hawai'i's land and water available for military use. The establishment of Forts DeRussey, Ruger, Shafter, and Armstrong in the first decade of the twentieth century reflected the military's need at that time for coastal defense and infantry units. Airfields at Bellows, Hickam, and Kāne'ohe established in the 1930s show the development of war-fighting capabilities in that era, while the creation of Barking Sands missile facility on Kaua'i during the Cold War reflected the expanding missile technologies of that time.

The transformation of the 2nd Brigade of the 25th Infantry Division (Light) into a Stryker Brigade Combat Team (SBCT) has caused the most recent expansion—the largest growth in military holdings since World War II. This transformation brings 291 Stryker urban assault vehicles to Hawai'i, requiring 25,663 additional acres of land on the islands of O'ahu and Hawai'i, as well as several thousand more soldiers and their families. As a consequence, according to the Environmental Impact Statement (EIS), overall military land holdings across the state thus increased by nearly 13 percent.² The army considered and rejected the possibility of locating Stryker facilities on Naval Magazine Lualualei, which occupies 8,105 acres in central O'ahu, because "a possible hazardous material spill site" would pose very high "potential clean-up costs."³ The EIS refrains from commenting on the source of this hazardous material, but it seems likely that the military occupation of that land since 1933 is the cause. As in Waikāne Valley, where land taken from Hawaiian farmers for military training was condemned because it was too riddled with unexploded ordnance to use and too expensive to clean up, Lualualei has been rendered unsuitable for the Stryker Brigade by past military use. Military efforts to mitigate environmental damage—to save some endangered species or preserve some land from maldevelopment—pale in comparison to its larger assaults on land, water, air, and ways of living.

And so on, and so on, and so on. The military has used Hawai'i's land and water as it has needed. When it no longer needs the State, it will leave.

BENEFITS OF THE MILITARY IN HAWAI'I

As reported in *The New York Times* on May 30, 2009, the nonpartisan citizen's group Taxpayers for Common Sense has named Senator Inouye "the last of the old bulls," referring to the band of aging Senators who have protected military projects from budget cuts.³ The Senator brings nearly a billion dollars in earmarks to Hawai'i each year. DBEDT estimates that the federal government spends \$10,957 per resident each year, making Hawai'i the fifth highest recipient of federal government spending. According to DBEDT, every billion dollars spent creates a billion and a half dollars in new business.⁴ The military also creates more than 18,000 jobs locally, and receives over six billion dollars in Department of Defense (DOD) expenditures, ranking our state twenty-fifth among the fifty states in receipt of these payments. Half of this amount is paid in wages to military and civilian workers, while the rest goes to local businesses and institutions in the form of procurement contracts and research grants. Lawrence Boyd, a labor economist at the University of Hawai'i at West O'ahu, estimates that the military accounts for about 23 percent of the economy on O'ahu. The direct and indirect economic dependence of many families in Hawai'i on military resources is unarguable. For this reason, it is all the more imperative that we recognize the contingent basis of these funds. Pretending that the military will always bring this much money into our state will not make it so.

COSTS OF THE MILITARY IN HAWAI'I

Promoters of the military, such as DBEDT and the Chamber of Commerce, usually fail to point out the accompanying costs of the various military investments. Hiding or minimizing the costs justifies the ill-conceived policy of desperately holding on to the military presence. On the other hand, if we foreground the costs of the military's activities, we are more likely to make the necessary plans to develop less damaging alternatives. Ironically, the post-Inouye military shrinkage that we are predicting also provides an enormous opportunity to reorganize our economy and protect our environment.

The most evident cost is environmental. Military training and its accompanying activities—building roads, transporting troops, washing and repairing vehicles, disposing of waste, live firing exercises, compacting the earth with the pounding of heavy equipment, washing silt into water supplies and onto reefs—cause enormous environmental damage. Water supplies are depleted,

endangered species lose their habitats, unexploded ordnance renders land unusable, and toxic wastes leach into soil, air, and water. Hawai'i's vulnerable marine and island ecosystems cannot sustain this destruction.

Other costs of the military's occupation of Hawai'i often go unheeded. The continuing destruction of irreplaceable and ancient Hawaiian cultural sites is an assault not only on land but on a way of life. Educating the children of military personnel puts enormous pressure on our public schools, and federal impact aid is woefully inadequate to cover the expenses. The most recent data available indicate that impact aid to Hawai'i amounts to about 11 percent of the cost of educating students of military and other federal employees.⁶ Despite the military's claims to take care of soldiers and their families, 3.5 percent of residents of Schofield Barracks, the army's largest base in Hawai'i, have incomes below the poverty level.⁷ For these young soldiers and their families, Hawai'i is clearly a hardship post.

Competition for rental units with military personnel, many of whom receive housing subsidies, further restricts Hawai'i's tight housing market for local residents. Prostitution is likely fueled by steady military customers. Higher rates of family violence often accompany the psychological stress of frequent deployments as well as the straitened economic circumstances of the lower ranks. Economic and psychological investments in the military impose hidden opportunity costs: we avoid developing other economic initiatives because we depend on the military instead.

This dependence is perpetuated in many ways. Our major newspapers are saturated with upbeat military coverage, and their editorial pages evince near hysteria when activists protest military expansion. Our university is becoming increasingly dependent on military funding for research. Our schools and university host extensive military training programs, and our young people turn to ROTC and the Army Reserves to pay for college. As of January 26, 2005, according to the *Washington Post's* Jonathan Finer, the Department of Defense indicated that per capita Hawai'i had more reservists called to active duty in the wars in Iraq and Afghanistan than any other state.⁸ Since the Army Reserves provide working-class persons in Hawai'i with college tuition at the University of Hawai'i as well as a needed second or third job, these activated reservists are disproportionately from the least affluent ethnic groups, including Hawaiian, part-Hawaiian, Filipino, Samoan, and other Pacific Islanders.

WHAT CAN WE DO NOW?

The first thing that people in Hawai'i can do is to face the reality that sooner rather than later the military is likely to scale back, or even terminate, its extensive training here and its corresponding claims on land and water. It is

foolhardy to face this huge change by holding blindly to the current situation rather than developing alternatives. When the military has withdrawn from other major training sites, such as those in the Philippines, it has left toxic environmental, economic, and social conditions behind. Planning for mitigation of these predictable consequences, and developing needed alternatives, cannot wait.

Second, we could listen to those who have carried on the analysis and critique of the military for many decades. The American Friends Service Committee (AFSC), Mālama Mākua, earthjustice, and others are our historians. We need to learn about the history of their protests, and to teach others. Mālama Mākua utilizes available legal tools to put continuing pressure on the military, resulting in small but significant improvements to the treatment of land and water. An earlier example of this approach is the Protect Koho‘olawe ‘Ohana, which insisted on cultural preservation and local control over the recovery of the damaged site. We must insist on generational planning, not limited five-year programs. We need to learn from past mistakes. William Aila, for example, stresses the importance of putting funds that may be forthcoming for the clean up of Mākua Valley into local rather than military hands, to limit waste and to provide employment locally.

Third, we could make better use of the procedures for Environmental Impact Statements (EIS) to contest ill-conceived expansion. We could insist on EIS's and refuse to accept waivers, as in the poorly handled case of the Superferry. Currently, EIS hearings are often contentious events where the military's plans are called into question, but they are poorly reported and most people pay little attention. Yet committed local groups often succeed in using the EIS process to delay military expansion, thus allowing them more time to articulate alternatives. For example, live fire training in Mākua Valley has been successfully curtailed by patient, persistent legal challenges. If local news outlets were less deferential to military interests and carried daily accounts of proposed changes, upcoming hearings, and relevant data, public involvement in the EIS process could be vastly expanded.

Fourth, we could make stronger use of parental authority to challenge military recruitment in the schools. Under a provision in the "No Child Left Behind" law, public schools that want to keep their federal funding must turn over the names, addresses, and phone numbers of high school students to recruiters. The local AFSC office has developed materials to support parents who want to remove their children's names from these lists. Concerned parents could organize larger, more public protests against this invasive outrage, and make more widespread use of their parental right to intervene. Like the EIS hearing, the "opt out" procedures are already in place; they do not have to be created, but they need to be more vigorously used.

Fifth, we could use the commitments of educational institutions to oppose discrimination toward women and toward gays/lesbians to put pressure on the military. Schools and universities usually have written prohibitions of discrimination, as well as programs to oppose sexual assault and abuse. These anti-discrimination provisions could be used to question and obstruct recruitment and ROTC/JROTC programs, since the military's "don't ask, don't tell" policy targets gay and lesbian service members. Similarly, the anti-violence provisions of educational institutions could be used to reveal and publicize the high rates of rape and sexual assault on women soldiers by their colleagues. While a 2006 Supreme Court decision (*Fair v. Rumsfeld*) upheld the military's right to recruit on campuses, it also upheld the rights of students and faculty to protest.

Lastly, it is vital for our state to develop economic alternatives to the military. We could invest much more substantially in clean energy, making use of our sunshine, wind, and waves to reduce our dependence on oil. We could develop sustainable agriculture, invest in food stuffs meeting local needs, and keep more consumer dollars within the local economy. We could explore the transformation of Pearl Harbor into a civilian shipyard, as was done at Subic Bay in the Philippines after the withdrawal of U.S. troops there. We could more fully explore niche tourisms that focus on environment, culture, or health, rather than the mass form with which we are familiar. We could invest in cleaning up and redeveloping land used and polluted by military activities.

We need a better future than the one that will no doubt come if we cling to the ways of life that our military dependence has fostered.

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1. William Aila, Personal interview, **PLEASE SUPPLY DATE**.
2. For the final EIS, see <<http://www.25idl.army.mil/sbcteis/feis/index.htm>>; the quotation is from page 29.
3. David K. Kirkpatrick, and David M. Herszenhorn, "In Battle to Cut Billions, a Spotlight on One Man," *New York Times*, May 30, 2009: A21.
4. For recent DBEDT estimates, see "Federal Economic Activities in Hawai'i, March 2009" <http://hawaii.gov/dbedt/info/economic/data_reports/federal/fed-report-2009.pdf>.
5. **PLEASE SUPPLY SOURCE for Lawrence Boyd estimate on page 51.**
6. Karen W. F. Lee, "Impact Aid and the Establishment of United States Department of Defense Schools in Hawai'i," Report #4 (Honolulu: Legislative Reference Bureau, 1993).
7. Schofield Barracks, Hawaii (HI) Poverty Rate Data, "Information about poor and low income residents," Apr. 19, 2010 <<http://www.city-data.com/poverty/poverty-Schofield-Barracks-Hawaii.htm>>.
8. Jonathan Finer, "Iraq War Is Affecting Small State in a Big Way: Vermont Has Most Deaths Per Capita," *Washington Post*, Feb. 9, 2005: A01, A10.

RECOMMENDED READING

Kathy E. Ferguson, and Phyllis Turnbull, *Oh, Say, Can You See? The Semiotics of the Military in Hawai'i* (Minneapolis: U of Minnesota P, 1999).

JOHN P. ROSA, RACE/ETHNICITY

1. Jonathan Y. Okamura, *Ethnicity and Inequality in Hawai'i* (Philadelphia: Temple UP, 2008): 6–7.
2. For more information on race categories for federal data collection, see <http://factfinder.census.gov/home/en/epss/race_ethnic.html>, and visit the U.S. Office of Management and Budget Web site at <<http://www.whitehouse.gov/omb/fedreg/1997standards.html>>.
3. Robert C. Schmitt, ed., *Hawai'i Data Book: A Statistical Reference to Hawai'i's Social, Economic and Political Trends* (Honolulu: Mutual, 2002).
4. Beth Bailey and David Farber, *The First Strange Place: The Alchemy of Race and Sex in World War II Hawaii* (New York: Free Press, 1992).
5. For an account of this election, see Tom Coffman, *Island Edge of America: A Political History of Hawai'i* (Honolulu: U of Hawai'i P, 2003): 148–53.
6. See Schmitt.
7. Joe Balaz, "Da Mainland To Me," *Electric Laulau*, CD (Honolulu: Hawai'i Dub Music 1998).
8. Census 2000 recorded a total resident population of 1,211,537 for Hawai'i; 476,162 indicated that they were White (either alone or in combination with another race), thus accounting for 39.3 percent of the islands' population. Though not a majority (over fifty percent), Whites are by far the largest racial/ethnic group. By comparison, 296,674—or 24.5 percent of the islands' population—indicated that they were part of

ocean power, biofuels, energy and externalities at the Public Utilities Commission where he has represented Life of the Land in over twenty regulatory proceedings. He is committed to Hawai'i's energy self-reliance and well being and is motivated by the values of aloha 'aina, malama 'aina and his love for Hawai'i nei.

Kathy E. Ferguson is Professor of Political Science Department and Women's Studies at the University of Hawai'i at Mānoa. She is co-author of *Oh, Say, Can You See? The Semiotics of the Military in Hawai'i* (University of Minnesota Press, 1999). She is currently writing a book on Emma Goldman.

Chip Fletcher is Professor and past Chair of the Department of Geology and Geophysics at the University of Hawai'i at Mānoa. He and his wife have raised three children in Kailua, O'ahu.

Dana Naone Hall is a former member of the Maui-Lana'i Island Burial Council, and has been involved with cultural, environmental, and historic preservation issues for twenty-five years. She lives in Haiku, Maui.

Susan Hippensteele is a faculty member in the Women's Studies Program at the University of Hawai'i at Mānoa, and a licensed attorney who has represented victims of domestic violence in Hawai'i courts. She has studied aspects of violence and discrimination in Hawai'i and worked in various capacities with victims since 1987.

Craig Howes has been Director of the Center for Biographical Research at the University of Hawai'i at Mānoa since 1997, Editor and Co-Editor of the journal *Biography: An Interdisciplinary Quarterly* since 1994, and a faculty member in the Department of English since 1980. The co-producer and principal scholar for the television documentary series *Biography Hawai'i*, he has also been active in Hawai'i's literary, drama, and arts community. A past President of the Hawai'i Literary Arts Council, and a former board member of Kumu Kahua Theatre, he currently serves as President of Monkey Waterfall Dance Theatre Company, and as a member of the board for the Hawaiian Historical Society.

Karl Kim is Professor of Urban and Regional Planning at the University of Hawai'i at Mānoa, where he is currently serving as the Executive Director of the National Disaster Preparedness Training Center. He was educated at Brown University and the Massachusetts Institute of Technology, and has been a Fulbright Scholar to Korea and the Russian Far East.

Ramsay Remigius Mahealani Taum is President of the Hawai'i-based Life Enhancement Institute (LEI) of the Pacific LLC. He lectures on host cultural values in the workplace at the University of Hawai'i School of Travel Industry Management (TIM), is on the Hawaii Visitors and Convention Bureau Board of Trustees, HVCB Marketing Advisory Committee, and the Hawaii Tourism Authority Hawaiian Cultural Program Advisory Group. Taum works with travel, leisure, retail, and development industries integrating cultural values and principles into contemporary business, and is a sought after keynote speaker, lecturer, trainer, and facilitator. His work promoting sustainable place-based Hawaiian cultural stewardship principles and practices is acknowledged locally, nationally, and internationally.

Patricia Tummons is a career journalist. She has written for *Environment Hawai'i* since 1990, winning many awards for her hard-hitting reports on Hawai'i's environmental problems. She was awarded a BA in philosophy and history from the University of Buffalo, and an MA in philosophy from the same institution. She makes her home in Hilo.

Phyllis Turnbull is retired from teaching in the Political Science Department at UH Manoa. She is co-author of *Oh, Say, Can You See? The Semiotics of the Military in Hawai'i* (University of Minnesota Press, 1999).

Trisha Kehaulani Watson, JD, PhD, earned her degrees from Washington State University and the University of Hawai'i at Mānoa. A lifelong Mānoa resident, she works as a community advocate and private consultant. She particularly enjoys working with Hawaiian nonprofit organizations and other cultural organizations. She specializes in environmental issues, historic preservation, fundraising/grant-writing, evaluation, research and policy matters.